

Lost Villages in South-West Carmarthenshire

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Lost Villages in South-west Carmarthenshire

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ABSTRACT—Recent research has corrected the commonly held view that medieval open-field agriculture and enclosure on the English pattern was absent from Wales. Similarly this paper corrects the impression that the desertion of villages and hamlets was confined to England by tracing the evolution of the settlement pattern in the Commote of Laugharne in south-west Carmarthenshire. It demonstrates that the present-day pattern is not, as is commonly supposed, the original pattern, but has evolved over the last 600–700 years from a number of villages and hamlets, to a landscape of predominantly scattered farmsteads with only four nucleations. The reasons for the disappearance of the other nucleations are shown to be similar to those responsible for lost villages in England, namely the desire of landlords to benefit from the boom in wool prices towards the end of the fifteenth and early part of the sixteenth centuries, and the creation of parks. It is also shown how the tribal basis of Welsh society and the tenurial system contributed to or prevented the depopulations.

IN HIS RESEARCHES into lost villages in England M. W. Beresford found that there was comparatively little depopulation in the northern and western counties of England, and, by inference, in Wales also. He records only one lost village in Carmarthenshire and that was submerged by the sea.¹ A few depopulations consequent upon the Black Death in 1349 have been noted elsewhere.² Apart from these isolated examples, information for the rest of Wales is almost non-existent. Yet the story of the commote, and later manor, of Laugharne in the south-western corner of Carmarthenshire in the period 1440–1590 is precisely one of the desertion of villages and hamlets (Fig. 1).

The earliest evidence extant for the settlement pattern of the commote of Laugharne is provided by an Inquisition of 1307.³ This reveals that in the commote, a neighbourhood of approximately 208 km², there were twenty-six villages and hamlets (Fig. 2). Laugharne, the largest village, contained 242 ha of demesne land, composed of bundles of quilleys in arable which lay intermingled with those of the tenants of the manor, 404 ha of pasture, and 5 ha of meadow. At the other extreme there were hamlets such as Honeycorse where there was only one carucate of land appurtenant to the settlement. In some instances the numbers of tenants were recorded. At Cyffig there were forty-four tenants sharing 'two carucates and a half' of arable land, plus an additional 113 ha, and a further 186 ha of demesne. At Castle Ely there were twenty-eight tenants working 6 carucates of land, while at Belliter and Maesgwrda twenty-four tenants worked 5 carucates, whereas at Marros twenty-six tenants held 15 carucates. In 1968 only Laugharne, Llansadurnen, Llanddowror and Pendine survive as nucleations: the other settlements have disappeared but their names remain attached to single farms (Fig. 2).

Elsewhere in Wales various authors have recognized the division of Welsh society in the Middle Ages into bond and free communities, and have demonstrated the distinctive settlements and evolutionary tendencies associated with each stratum of society.⁴ Although the distinction between bond and free communities in Laugharne commote frequently became confused through the grants of beneficent landlords and other circumstances, the tenurial status

certainly contributed in part to the disappearance of the settlements. Of the twenty-six medieval settlements in 1307 only five were likely to have been free, although the benevolence of the lords of the manor, the de Brians, soon resulted in the conversion of some bond settlements into free settlements.⁵

It is easier to trace the disappearance of settlements in England than in Wales. In the former country Beresford identified lost villages by using the Subsidy Roll of 1334 and the Hearth Tax Returns for 1377-79. Neither of these sources is available for the district discussed

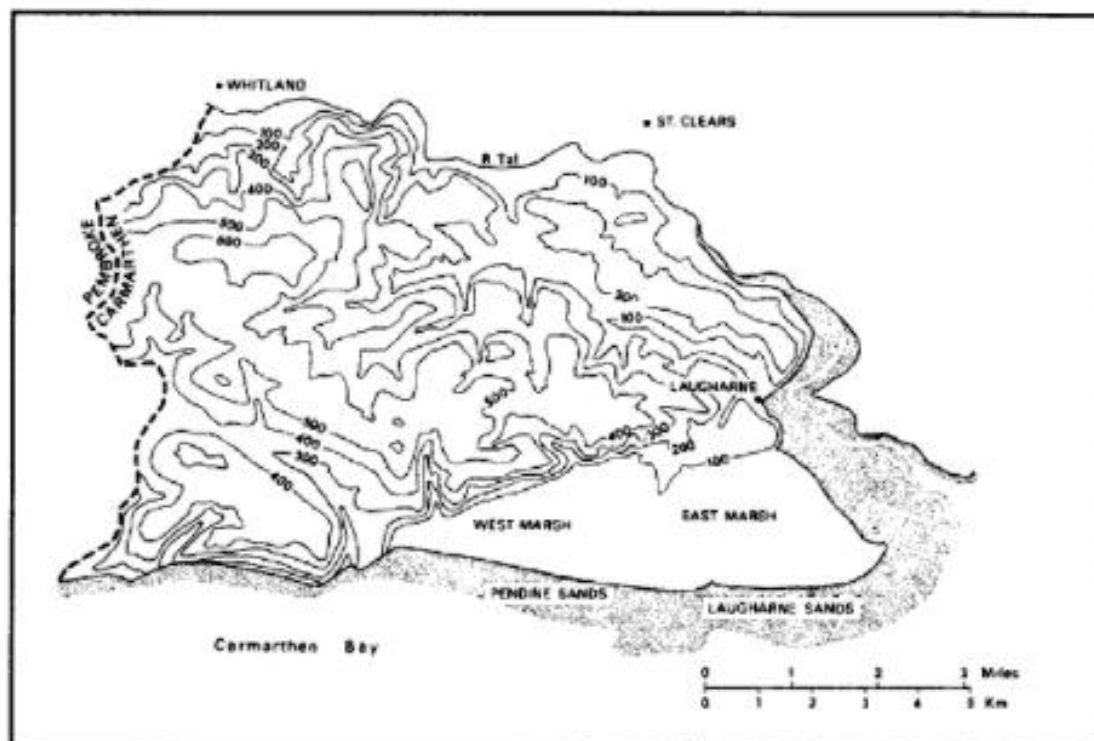


FIGURE 1—The commote of Laugharne: location and relief

in this paper, and no archaeological excavation has taken place to date. Nevertheless, by the application of techniques employed elsewhere, the use of such documentary material as is available and field scrutiny, a convincing case can be presented.

Early workers were often led to lost village sites by the presence of isolated churches and manor houses in the midst of pastures. Such structures would have survived because in all probability they were the only stone buildings in the medieval village. In Wales, however, the occurrence of isolated churches was not considered to be unusual because the economy was deemed to be, and to have been, predominantly pastoral and each church would be placed in a central position easily accessible from the scattered farms. This premise is based upon the false assumptions that the single scattered farmstead was the only initial settlement form and that animal husbandry was predominant. Recent work has proven beyond doubt that in the Middle Ages Wales was a self-sufficing community in which the area under grain was far from insignificant, particularly in the areas bordering the coasts and the English border, and it is no accident that the few surviving examples of medieval strip cultivation in Wales are to be found

in these areas.⁶ Two examples will suffice to show that a sedentary, grain-producing community was established in south-west Carmarthenshire at the close of the fourteenth century. In 1401 David Webbe of Laugharne successfully petitioned Henry IV to allow him to purchase food supplies and he was 'to deliver to them certain beans by them bought of various men of Somerset and Gloucestershire ... by reason of the late disturbances in Wales'.⁷ In 1405 William Chapman and William Rowland of Laugharne were granted a licence to buy '60 quarters of wheat, 120 quarters of malt and barley ... for the equipment of the castle of

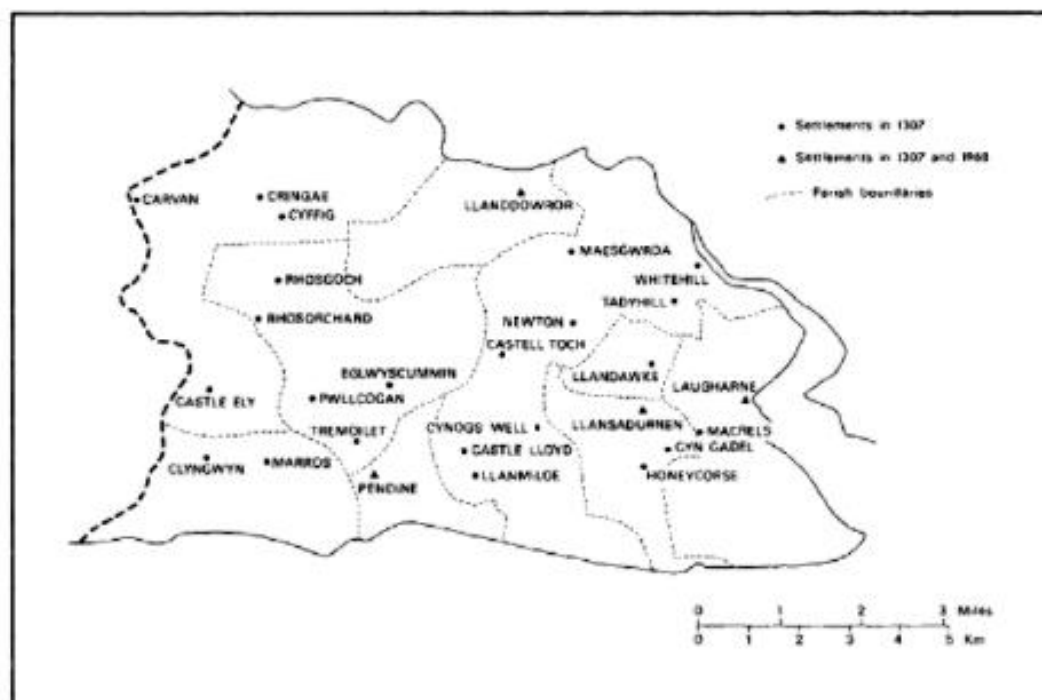


FIGURE 2—Settlement pattern

Laugharne, in any place in England and take them in any ships to the said castle',⁸ because of the extent to which the demesne lands of Laugharne had been ravaged during the Owain Glyndwr rebellion, and the urgent demand for grain.

The fact that the nucleated settlement preceded the scattered farm and was the original settlement form can be demonstrated by a consideration of EglwysCummin. The thesis for the isolated church being a deliberate foundation supposes that its site is convenient to the scattered farms in that parish, but when the site is not conveniently situated, as in the cases of EglwysCummin and Cyffig, this thesis is suspect. The parish church of EglwysCummin is enclosed within a circular structure approximately 230 m in diameter. Taken in conjunction with this suggestive shape, the discovery of an inscribed Ogam stone *in situ* in the churchyard indicates that this site had been occupied well before the Norman Conquest and probably as early as the fifth or sixth centuries.⁹ In 1307 there was demesne land to the north of the church worked by the inhabitants of EglwysCummin and the tenants of the bond hamlets of Rhosgoch, Rhosorchard, Pwllcogan and Trefmoilet which were appurtenant to the parent settlement.

Unfortunately, in no instance was the number of tenants recorded. In 1609 a survey of the manor of EglwysCummin recorded the extent to which the settlement in the parish, then conterminous with the manor, had altered.¹⁰ The hamlets of Rhosorchard and Trefmoilet had already become single farms; Rhosgoch had been reduced to two tenements; Pwllcogan to five tenements being *in* Pwllcogan rather than being called Pwllcogan; while EglwysCummin had disappeared. The land released by these shrinkages had become part of farm holdings totalling up to 28 ha distributed in parcels throughout the former open fields and commons. In 1609 there were fourteen farms bearing either the same names as present-day farms or easily recognized precursors of these names.

Evidence for the destruction of EglwysCummin is forthcoming in a case heard in the Court of Exchequer in 1621.¹¹ The witnesses were asked whether they knew 'the two messuages and tenements in the town of EglwysCummin and how many acres belong to them . . . and how long since and in what tenants time have the said houses or any of them fallen and have been suffered to decay'. Richard Williams, a 76-year-old yeoman, said that 'he knoweth the two tenements of his majesty's ground in the town of EglwysCummin and saith that he saw divers houses, barns, stables, cowhouses and suchlike upon the tenements about 30 years since'. This would seemingly place destruction around 1570. Further evidence supports this statement and indicates that the defendants had 'broken down and defaced the boundaries, meerstones and marks whereby the two tenements were distinguished'.

Further evidence cited in this case helps to locate the town of EglwysCummin. The defendants had 'inclosed a great quantity of the King's land in a part near Pantygrove on the east side of EglwysCummin situated upon the right hand of a highway leading from Rhydgoch to the King's highway to a tenement called Windleway. The defendants have not in the close but about 4 acres [1.6 ha] being the defendants inheritance and all the rest of the lands in the close is the lord's lands of the lordship of EglwysCummin and did belong to the tenements where Rees Nicholas and Lewis Thomas deceased did heretofore dwell in the town of EglwysCummin who were both the lord's tenants'. This suggests that the defendants had illegally inclosed part of the common pasture appurtenant to the tenements in 'the town' and had not been prevented from doing so because there were no residents. Further evidence of encroachments and amalgamations effected without opposition in the previous twenty years confirms this process. This evidence, together with that of field names such as Old Hill and Croft Llandre, points to the site of the town being in the fields immediately north and east of the church.

The most prominent remains occur in these fields. There is one massive stone wall fronted by a roadway which is sunken some way below the level of the B class road bordering it. This is probably the site of the Manor House or Court House. There are other sunken levels in this field as well as humps and lines of mounds which probably denote the sites of former houses. Beresford says that 'sunken roadways are the most immediately visible features of [lost] village sites'.¹² G. Treharne, in his booklet on EglwysCummin Church at the beginning of this century, marks on a plan of the church the 'sites of buildings' to the north-east of the churchyard, while the survey of 1609 records a number of closes in this area named 'old walls'. Thus there need be no doubt that there was a nucleated settlement at EglwysCummin situated in the shadow of the church and the great house.

Field evidence of this nature is less readily available for other parts of the commote, but documentary evidence makes it clear that similar depopulations were occurring contemporaneously. It is clear that the five surviving tenements in Pwllcogan in 1609 were a shrunken

remnant of what had formerly been a larger settlement and that at this date it had reached an advanced stage of destruction. Thomas and Henry Davies, who were agents of the lord of the manor, took advantage of his frequent absences to dispossess those tenants who remained and to remove all traces of their holdings by digging up the boundary marks of the parcels in the open fields and enclosing their ill-won acquisitions. It is apparent that they were not always wholly successful since there are records of '1 parcel of arable lying within a close called Upper Whitemill' and 'there is certain freehold lands and the knights lands intermixed one with the other'.¹³ The end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century witnessed the conversion of the open-field strips to enclosed *parcs* in Pwllcogan because there were 'no occupants to come into possession of the tenements which came vacant'.¹⁴ By 1841 the five tenements had become four, namely East Pool, Middle Pool and two West Pools, each exceeding 40 ha in size.¹⁵ The only subsequent change has been the consolidation of the two West Pools into one larger farm. The site of medieval Pwllcogan is undoubtedly coincident with the present-day West and Middle Pool farmhouses which adjoin each other and whose owners recall removing huge quantities of building stones in fields adjacent to the farmhouses.

Both of these depopulations are associated with the tenurial system. In a bond village like EglwysCummin the rents and services were a communal obligation, so that with decreases in population which occurred during both the Black Death and Owain Glyndwr's rebellion, there was a corresponding increase in the burden of the survivors. Many bondmen fled in order to escape their heavier obligations. As a result, the 'empty' lands presented a favourable field for the activities of the estate consolidator who, by means of legitimate leases and illegitimate encroachments, gradually converted the bond land into compact farms.¹⁶ As the estate consolidator was often the fount of local power no intervention was forthcoming from the court of the lordship. On the other hand, Pwllcogan had achieved free status and the tenants were in a better position to retain their lands, but the continued operation of the inheritance laws meant that their holdings would become progressively smaller, especially when some increase of population was inevitable during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The ultimate disappearance of the township of Pwllcogan was caused by this process, and the lord of the manor and his agents acquired the dwindling resources of their less fortunate neighbours and were able to bring about the concentration of tribal holdings into compact farms.

A vivid illustration of these forces and their effects and in particular the activities of the local agents of the landowners is preserved in a letter written by Susan Morgan of Eglwys-Cummin to the Earl of Essex in 1598: 'If your lordship take not some good order with your officers, that her Highness's poor tenants and your lordship's may not be oppressed as they are, if it be continued but one half year longer, they and all their "famyne" will go abegging, as a number of them doth go already, and not able to pay her Highness's rents. Many of them have been forced, threatened, some by fair means some by foul to give up their good old leases, and to pay for their new leases more fines than they were able: and for the writing of litle leases in parchment or paper they paid 10/- a piece. As many as kept their old leases they were faith to take new and pay 10/- a piece, and in taking of the new they encumber themselves that they are utterly undone. They have put in their leases that they shall answer every fortnight in every court they keep, which courts were never wont to be kept but twice a year. If they do not answer in the courts every fortnight they are to be amerced. His bailiffs likewise beg of them and if they may not have, they threaten them with their master, so that they needs must give. When the gifts have been given those bailiffs are put away and the new must have likewise as they had. He terrifies the people saying he is your lordship's steward and musterman. He is

sued before my Lord Bishop, but he still delays the matter saying he is in your Highness's service . . . so with these officers and brags they oppress all her Highness's poor subjects. I have written nothing but the country shall prove, saving your Honour's men and officers.'¹⁷ This remarkable letter confirms that depopulation was occurring and makes equally clear the reasons why.

There were other factors causing depopulation towards the end of the fourteenth century. Many of the tenants of the lordships of Laugharne and EglwysCummin had supported the Glyndwr rebellion and consequently they forfeited their holdings. The lord was given permission to levy fines of admission on anyone desirous of replacing the rioters, but few were likely to have been in a position to afford the fines so that many holdings would have remained untenanted and decay would set in.

The motive for the destruction of EglwysCummin, Pwllcogan and the other villages in the commote was profit. Enclosure for sheep was lucrative at this time and grazing was considered to be a more profitable use for enclosed land than cultivation for corn. That this was happening in south-west Carmarthenshire is apparent from the amount of arable land that was being enclosed and converted to pasture.¹⁸ To the land magnate, the attraction of sheep farming was the light labour bill. The small flocks run by the peasants on the common pasture had provided a precedent for the large sheep farm. The frequency of illegal stealing, the legal wrangles over land and the driving of sheep over 160 km to the border counties, Bristol and Exeter in order to sell them, are all indications that sheep farming was a profitable enterprise. The numbers of sheep can be gauged from the flocks kept by the lords of Laugharne on their demesne. When Sir John Perrot held the lordship in 1592 he had about 1300 ewes, 600 wethers, 600 hoggets and 400 lambs. He sold wool amounting to 130 todcs at 28s. a todd. In addition he sold annually 200 ewes at £4 or £5 a score, and 200 wethers at £6 a score. His total income from sheep farming was about £300 each year.¹⁹ When Sir Henry Lyndley and Sir Gelly Meyrick held the lordship in 1595 they kept a total of 2400 sheep and 120 cows, cared for by only 4 tenants, each of whom was responsible for 1 bull, 30 cows and 600 sheep.²⁰ During Rees Phillip Scarfe's time in 1608 the demesnes were stocked with over 2000 sheep of English breed, 100 young cattle and 166 milk cows, all of which were valued at £1600.²¹ If this is insufficient proof that the economy of the area was orientated towards sheep farming, the fact that only 11 ha of the demesne was sown with barley and only 12 ha with oats must prove it conclusively.²² The peak of sheep farming seems to have been reached during the decades spanning the turn of the century, because by 1611 'the wool of every 16 wethers, hogs and ewes make a todd and every todd was worth 25/-; the wool of 20 lambs made a todd and every todd was worth 20/-',²³ so that not only had numbers of sheep fallen slightly but prices had also fallen.

The rent of each tenant at this time was 1 todd of wool from wethers, hogs, ewes and lambs; 20 stones (c. 120 kg) of cheese and 1 kinterkin (c. 50 kg) of butter from each 100 ewes. Cheese was usually made from ewes' milk at the rate of 25 stones (c. 160 kg) per 100 ewes. The stock carried on each tenant farm varied from 20 cows and 600 sheep at Marros²⁴ to 113 cows and 200 sheep at Clyngwyn.²⁵ The sizes of the tenant farms also varied considerably; Kingaddle Dairy covered 27 ha,²⁶ while Penylan and Ffynon Cyll covered 101 ha between them.²⁷ Thus it is clear that the lord had a source of income not only from his own stock but also from his tenants' rents. The profitability of sheep farming was so great that men of estate were offering the lords of Laugharne £440 per annum to rent only part of the demesnes. It is small wonder, therefore, that in this scramble no thought was given to the plight of the

villagers. It is probable that the boom had terminated by 1661, the year when part of West Marsh was embanked for the first time. Before 1661 West Marsh had been a poor sheep run, used only when there was no fear of flooding by the sea. After embanking in 1661 it would have been used as an improved sheep pasture if the boom had still been in progress but the fact that in this year over 40 ha were sown with barley and that this area increased by a further 20 ha in the two following years emphasizes that the balance had swung back again to arable farming.²⁸

The parish of Llandawke furnishes evidence to support Beresford's contention that 'the pastures of lost villages were markedly larger than the enclosed fields of later enclosure'.²⁹ As late as 1841 Llandawke farm was composed of three large fields comprising respectively 119, 37 and 23 ha along with 37 ha of woodland.³⁰ The farm occupied over two-thirds of the area of the parish. Three families lived in the farmhouse which was formerly the manor house. In addition there were a rectory and three recently constructed cottages with a total population of twenty-six.³¹ In 1670 there were only three buildings in the parish; the rectory, the manor house and a cottage.³² The only earlier mention of Llandawke is as a hamlet in 1307. The silence in the intervening period is puzzling and all that can be stated with certainty is that Llandawke is an example of a settlement which fell foul of the desire of the owner to create a large sheep run. 'The Great House standing alone . . . bearing the name of a former parish and perhaps including a lonely parish church . . . is not an uncommon feature of the English landscape.'³³ On the evidence afforded by Llandawke this statement might apply equally appropriately to the Welsh landscape.

Another explanation for the disappearance of a village can be invoked for Cyffig. In Elizabethan times a park was a mark of social rank serving egoistic conceit rather than any practical purpose. Cyffig Park was carved out of the demesnes by the lord of the manor Sir John Perrot. It was divorced from the surrounding land by a paling, and the series of field boundaries curved to follow the line of the paling is the most vivid reminder of the Park remaining in the present landscape. The present-day farms of Great, Little and Old Pale incorporate most of the area formerly occupied by the Park.

In 1307 there were forty-four tenants in Cyffig, but at the time that the Park was created at the end of the sixteenth century there were only sixteen tenants.³⁴ The land which had been encompassed by the Park had been subject to open-field cultivation in strips and some tenants received alternative land in exchange for their land within the Park.³⁵ However, the exchanges were not equivalent in either area or value and many holdings were reduced below subsistence level and their tenants left the village. In 1602 only six tenants remained³⁶ and by 1640 the demesnes had been partitioned into a number of farms.³⁷ There is no visible trace of the village today, but aerial photographs suggest that it was sited in the field immediately south of the church. A field survey has failed to provide conclusive evidence.

These examples illustrate the variety of ways by which settlements disappeared in this area. The other depopulations can be explained in terms of one or more of these processes. It is necessary finally to consider a few of these depopulations in order to demonstrate that the change from a village-hamlet pattern to one in which scattered farmsteads predominated was gradual rather than catastrophically sudden. The yardsticks against which the changes can be measured are the Inquisition Post Mortem of Guy de Brian in 1307,³⁸ Ministers' Accounts 1437-1580³⁹ and 1652,⁴⁰ a number of rentals and surveys of the lordship of Laugharne in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,⁴¹ the Hearth Tax,⁴² estate records and the Tithe Survey around 1840.

In 1307 there were twenty-four tenants working 5 carucates of land at Belliter and Maesgwrda. By 1580 there were only six tenants and, as the burden of the rents fell upon the survivors, a certain amount was 'deducted for the rents of divers lands and tenements in decay' in order to reduce the load. This reduction and the re-assessment of the farm rent fee of the lordship in 1628 appears to have had the effect, for in 1652 there were still six tenants. However, the different rents which they paid, varying from £3 12s. 6d. to 13s. 4d. indicated that some tenant farms had been enlarged. These tenements became part of the Westmead estate at the

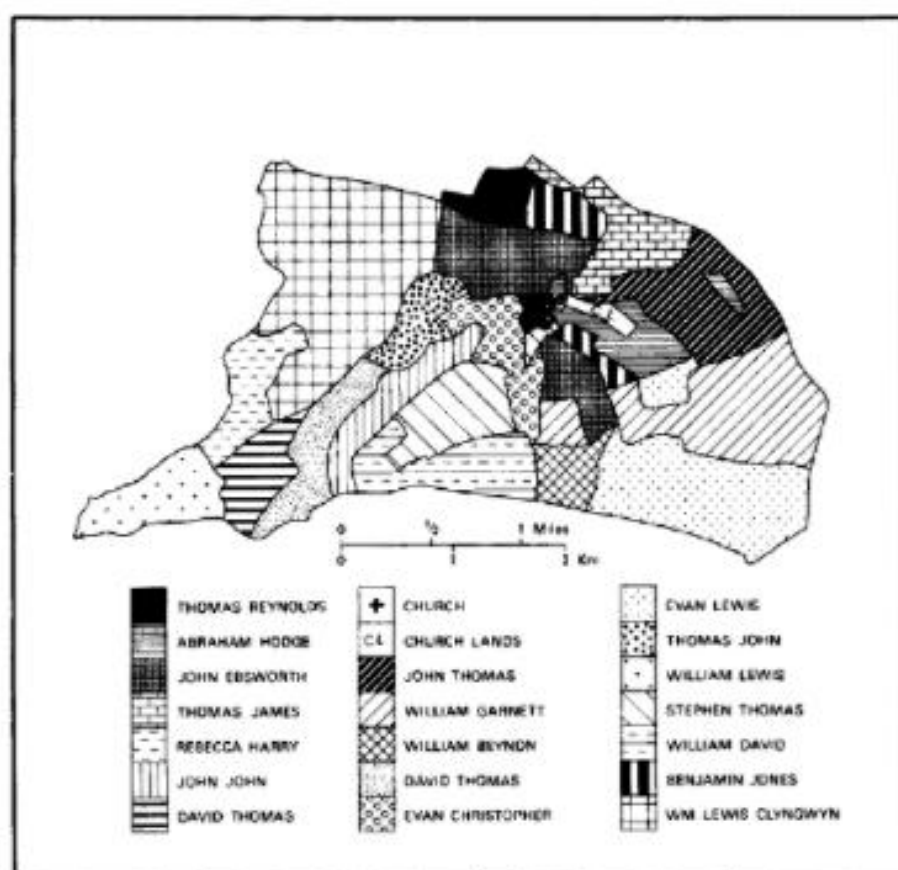


FIGURE 3—Farm tenants in Marros Parish 1841

end of the seventeenth century and were owned then, as in 1307, by the lord of the manor.⁴³ In 1840 the only pointers to the medieval arrangements were provided by the two separate farms of Belliter and Maesgwrda.⁴⁴

A similar evolution can be traced for the village of Castle Ely where twenty-eight tenants worked 6 carucates of land and paid the lord £5 8s. rent in 1307. By 1437 many of these tenements were 'in the Kings hands through the want of hirers', but the rent had increased to £7 15s. 1d. In 1580 eight tenants held eleven tenements between them and paid £22 18s. annual rent, so that the amount per tenant had increased from approximately 4s. in 1307 to nearly £3 in 1580. Not surprisingly, therefore, many tenants were unable to meet their obligations and relinquished their holdings. In 1652 there were still eight tenants but the range of rents had widened to £6 13s. 4d. for the highest and 8s. for the lowest. In 1840 there was only

the 66 ha farm of Castle Ely West and the 85 ha farm of Castle Ely East while the medieval mill also remained as a separate holding.⁴⁵ These properties formed part of the Westmead estate owned by the lord of the lordship.⁴⁶

A similar pattern emerges when other settlements are considered, but with minor variations in timing. Both Syck and Clyngwyn had become single farmsteads by 1652. At the other extreme, the final depopulation of Marros was postponed, thanks to the mining of limestone in the Greenbridge valley. In 1875 the 'High Street' was 'full of bustle on the occasion of the annual sheep fair which was the most important in the district.'⁴⁷ The lord of the lordship and owner of Westmead estate, Lady Hawarden, opened a school in the High Street in 1840 which today serves as a barn. Already by 1924 it had become a 'dilapidated hamlet', and today the twenty-six tenants of 1307 and the nineteen tenants of 1841 (Fig. 3) have been reduced to the

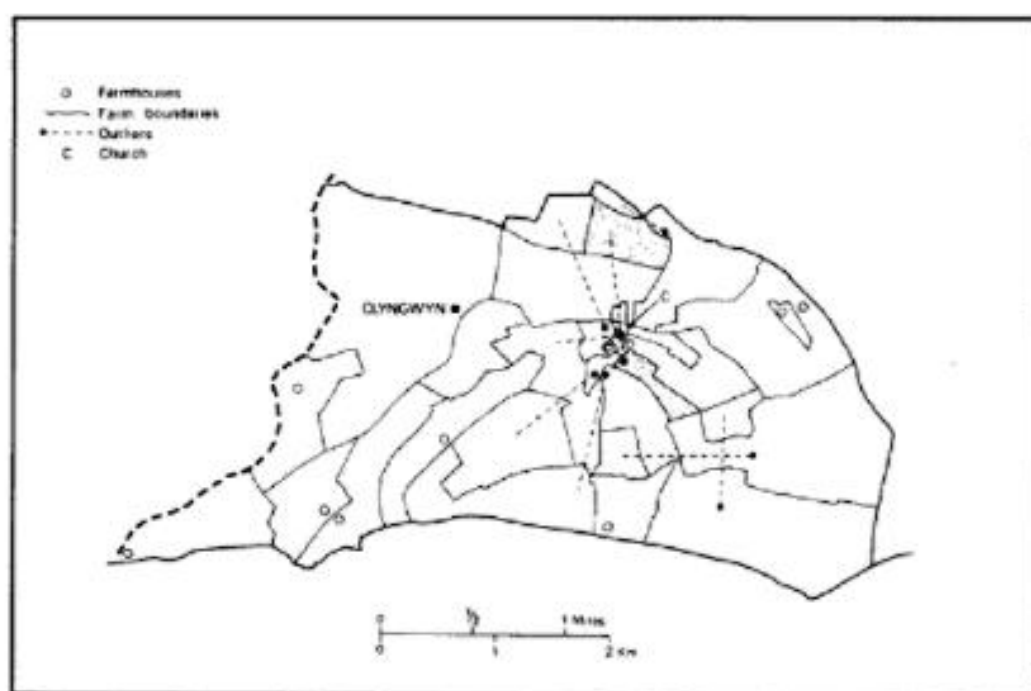


FIGURE 4—Fragmentation of farm holdings in Marros parish 1841. Turpitts farm (stippled) illustrates the land holding near the church with a larger holding to the north on Marros mountain which was formerly the common pasture or 'cyttir'.

occupiers of four farmhouses strung out along the line of the former High Street, now a very rough track.

At the time of the Tithe Survey around 1840 all the single farms on the sites of the former villages or hamlets of 1307 were exceptionally large both by local standards and by Welsh standards in general. Clyngwyn contained 143 ha and Honeycorse 77 ha⁴⁸ (Fig. 4). As settlements such as these decayed, the reclamation by drainage of the 'lands in the lowlands' brought new areas into permanent cultivation. Thus, some at least of the population was redistributed, and depopulation was not complete. Many of the dispossessed found their way to Laugharne where the activities of the port offered a variety of occupations. To others Laugharne offered an avenue of escape to other parts of South Wales and farther afield.

Four settlements within the commote survived as nucleations (Fig. 2). Laugharne had been

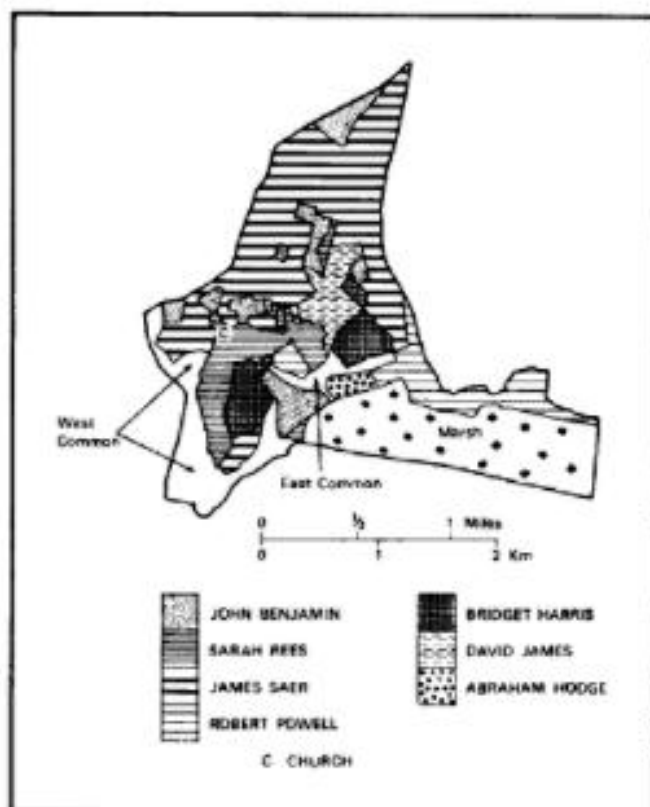
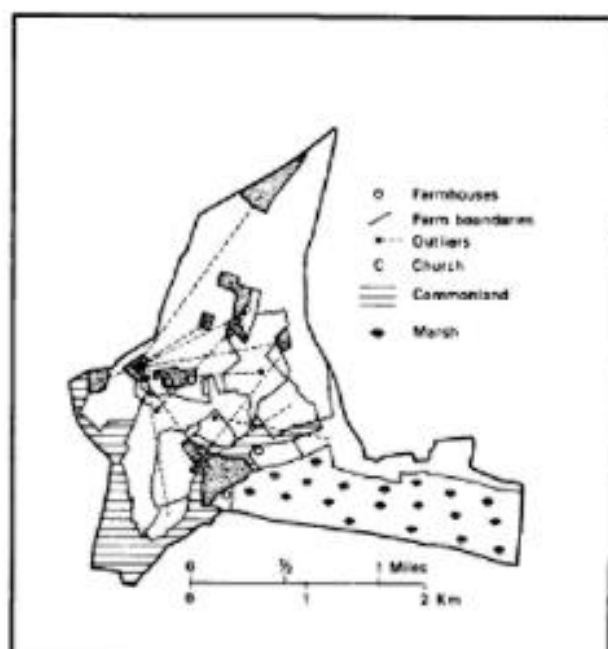


FIGURE 5—Farm tenants in Pendine parish 1841

FIGURE 6—Fragmentation of farm holdings in Pendine parish 1841. Big House farm (stippled) illustrates colonization of sharelands away from the *Hendref*. The larger southern section was formerly part of the Common pasture.

the centre of the lordship and later became incorporated as a borough: Llanddowror was the seat of a separate lordship with an ecclesiastical base: both Pendine and Llansadurnen were originally free units where *tir gwelyawg* tenure appears to have contributed to settlement survival. Even as late as the end of the eighteenth century the land in Llansadurnen was being cultivated in strips or open-field furlongs,⁴⁹ and in a sale in 1915 the land was still being described as the 'freeholdings'.⁵⁰ The surviving settlement at Pendine was composed of seven farms congregated around the church in 1841.⁵¹ These farms embraced small areas of land around the dwellings near the church, as well as larger areas in other parts of the parish (Fig. 5). Each of the farms situated away from the church possessed an outlier in the area immediately surrounding the church. This pattern suggests strongly that the environs of the church constituted the *Hendref* (old settlement) of a free clan where each member of the clan had a stake in the land and where fragmentation eventually achieved its most extreme form. As the amount of land appurtenant to each holding in this area was reduced, new sharelands (*Rhandiroedd*) were colonized in other parts of the parish. However, the farmsteads would remain in or near the *Hendref* because the land here was the most valuable; distances to the new sharelands were not great in a small parish; access was required to the common lands to the south of the settlement, to the seasonal meadowlands adjoining the sea and to the sea itself which provided a supplementary source of food. At present, the location of the farm-

houses survives but amalgamation of the separate parts of the holdings has occurred and the modern farms are contiguous. Modern Pendine has grown up along the sea shore.

The Tithe map of 1841 shows that in Marros also there were seven farmhouses congregated close to the church.⁵² These farms also held small areas here and larger areas in other parts of the parish (Fig. 6). There is additional fragmentation of holdings, but none of the outlying farms possessed land in the immediate vicinity of the church, as in Pendine (Fig. 5). The explanation of the difference lies in the fact that Marros was originally a bond settlement upon which *tir gwelyawg* tenure was superimposed, probably by grant or enfranchisement by a lord, at an unknown date. Consequently, the pattern associated with free settlements came to be superimposed upon a bond base.

A recent excavation on the territory of a Lord Marcher along the Welsh border caused the author to question whether 'the dispersed pattern of settlement as shown on the modern map (was) an original feature of the English settlement', as is the usual interpretation.⁵³ It is almost certain that excavation in the Marcher Lordship of Laugharne would confirm that the four surviving nucleations are the remnant of a pattern of settlement that was once universal in south-west Carmarthenshire. Just as recent research has demonstrated the presence of nucleations of medieval origin with open-field agriculture contrary to earlier-held opinions, so it has been the purpose of this paper to demonstrate that some villages and hamlets in Wales have experienced the same fate as many in England.

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NOTES

¹ M. W. BERESFORD, *The lost villages of England* (1954), 417

² SIR J. E. LLOYD, *History of Carmarthenshire* (1915), I, 246: '11 of 12 gafael men in Llanllwch died and other tenants abandoned their holdings. The number of heriots increased sharply. At the Welsh County Court 1349, 2 in January, 5 in July, 60 in August and 40 more before Michaelmas'.

³ P.R.O., I.P.M. 1 Edw. II 1307. C.134/file 6. All future references to settlement in 1307 are derived from this source.

⁴ G. R. J. JONES, 'Some medieval settlements in North Wales', *Trans. Inst. Br. Geogr.* 19 (1953), 51-72; 'The pattern of settlement on the Welsh Border', *Agric. Hist. Rev.* 8 (1960), 66-81. T. JONES PIERCE, 'Agrarian aspects of the tribal system in medieval Wales', *Annals de l'Est* 1 (1959), 317-21.

⁵ Charter presented to the inhabitants of Laugharne by the Lord Marcher, Sir Guy de Brian, around 1300, now in the Laugharne Corporation Muniments

⁶ MARGARET DAVIES, 'The open fields of Laugharne', *Geography* 40 (1955), 169-79; *idem*, 'Rhosili open field and related South Wales field patterns', *Agric. Hist. Rev.* 4 (1956), 80-96. Laugharne Corporation Muniments.

⁷ P.R.O. Cal. Close Rolls, 2 Hen. IV.m.16, 243

⁸ *Idem*, 7 Hen. IV.m.32, 96

⁹ *Inventory of Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire* (H.M.S.O., 1950), V, County of Carmarthen, 39-40

¹⁰ P.R.O. Rentals and Surveys, S.C.12, 17/76, ff. 8 and 14

¹¹ P.R.O. Exch. Procs., E134/18 Jas.1/H.9 (Carms.)

¹² Beresford (1954), *op. cit.*, 32

¹³ P.R.O. Rentals and Surveys, S.C.12, 17/76, ff. 13 and 17

¹⁴ *Park* was used extensively in this part of Wales to describe the enclosures from the open fields and this sense of the word is preserved in modern field names in this area.

¹⁵ T.R.C., Tithe Map & App., Parish of EglwysCummin 1841, 47/61

¹⁶ N.L.W. Llwyngwair MSS illustrate this process.

¹⁷ Cal. MSS, Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield House, pt. 9, 422-3

¹⁸ P.R.O. Rentals and Surveys, S.C.12, 17/76, ff. 1-17

¹⁹ P.R.O. Exch. Procs., E.134/9 Jas.1/M.11 (Carms.)

²⁰ *Idem*, E.134/8 Jas.1/E.5 (Carms.)

- ²¹ *Idem.*, E.112/151/36
²² *Idem.*, E.134/9 Jas.1/M.11 (Carms.)
²³ *Ibid.*
²⁴ P.R.O. Rentals and Surveys, S.C.11/1014
²⁵ P.R.O. Exch. Sp. Comm., E.178/208
²⁶ P.R.O. Exch. Leases, E.367/1954, f. 169
²⁷ *Idem.*, E.367/623
²⁸ P.R.O. Exch. Procs., E.134/17 Chas.II/E.9 (Carms.). *Idem.*, E.134/17 Chas.II/T.2 (Carms.)
²⁹ Beresford, *op. cit.*, 53
³⁰ T.R.C., Tithe Map & App., Llandawke Parish 1841, 47/25
³¹ P.R.O. Enumerators' Returns, H.O.107, Bdl. 1382
³² P.R.O. Hearth Tax, E.179/22/128
³³ Beresford, *op. cit.*, 140
³⁴ P.R.O. Rentals and Surveys, S.C.17/77
³⁵ P.R.O. St. Ch., 5/P.40/37
³⁶ P.R.O. Exch. Leases, E.310/34/208
³⁷ *Idem.*, E.367/623
³⁸ P.R.O. I.P.M., 1.Edw. II 1307, C. 134/file 6
³⁹ P.R.O. Min. Accts., S.C.6, 1165-1169
⁴⁰ N.L.W. MSS, 10118
⁴¹ P.R.O. L.R.R.O., South Wales Inrolments, Vol. 10, f. 108, 1652. N.L.W. Llwyngwair MSS., 13466.1671; 13540.1687; 13490.1694-5
⁴² P.R.O. Hearth Tax, E.179/220/128
⁴³ John Francis MSS, Carmarthen
⁴⁴ T.R.C., Tithe Map & App., Parish of Laugharne, 47/21
⁴⁵ *Idem.*, Cyffig Parish, 47/19. P.R.O. Enumerators' Returns, Cyffig Parish, H.O.107, Bdl. 2475
⁴⁶ John Francis MSS, Carmarthen
⁴⁷ G. G. T. Treharne, 'Laugharnshire', *Trans. Carm. antiq. Soc.* 19 (1924), 21
⁴⁸ T.R.C., Tithe Map & App., Marros Parish, 47/72. C.R.O., Llansadurnen Parish Rate Books
⁴⁹ N.L.W. Llwyngwair MSS, 13968
⁵⁰ John Francis MSS, Carmarthen
⁵¹ T.R.C., Tithe Map & App., Pendine Parish, 47/80
⁵² *Ibid.*, Marros Parish, 47/72
⁵³ S. C. Stanford, pt. 1 'A medieval settlement at Detton Hall', *Trans. Shrops. archaeol. nat. Hist. Soc.* 8 (1967), 27-47

Abbreviations:

P.R.O.	Public Records Office
C.R.O.	Carmarthenshire Record Office
N.L.W.	National Library of Wales
T.R.C.	Tithe Redemption Commission
I.P.M.	<i>Inquisition Post Mortem</i>
Cal.	Calendar
Exch.	Exchequer
Procs.	Proceedings
Sp. Comm.	Special Commission
St. Ch.	Star Chamber
Min. Accts	Ministers Accounts
App.	Apportionment

Résumé—*Les villages perdus au sud-ouest du Carmarthenshire.* Une étude récente a corrigé cette idée commune selon laquelle on croyait que l'agriculture « ouverte » ou celle que l'on pratique en enclos sur le modèle anglais faisaient exception au Pays de Galles. Parallèlement cet article corrige cette impression que l'abandon des villages et des hameaux est limité à l'Angleterre, parce qu'elle suit le type d'installation de la « commote de Laugharne » au sud-ouest du Carmarthenshire. Il démontre que le modèle actuel n'est pas, comme on le suppose vulgairement, le modèle original, mais qu'il a évolué au long de ces 600-700 dernières années depuis un petit nombre de villages et de hameaux jusqu'à un paysage de fermes, pour la plupart isolées avec quatre nucléations seulement.

La disparition des autres nucléations est démontrée comme ayant la même cause que celle des villages perdus en Angleterre à savoir le désir pour les propriétaires de tirer profit de la prospérité soudaine des prix de la laine vers la fin du XV^e et au début du XVI^e siècle, et aussi de la création de parcs. Le fait suivant est aussi révélé: à savoir comment la base de la société galloise qui vivait en tribus et le système de tenure ont contribué au dépeuplement, ou l'ont prévenu.

FIG. 1—La commune de Laugharne: la location et le relief

FIG. 2—Le modèle d'installation

FIG. 3—Des fermiers de la commune de Marros en 1841

FIG. 4—La fragmentation de terre affermée de la commune de Marros en 1841. La ferme « Turpitts » (pointillée) explique la tenure près de l'église, et il y a sur le nord de la montagne Marros une possession plus grande qui a été autrefois le pâturage commun ou le « cyttir ».

FIG. 5—Des fermiers de la commune de Pendine en 1841

FIG. 6—La fragmentation de terre affermée de la commune de Pendine en 1841. La ferme « Big House » (pointillée) explique la colonisation de terre partagée au loin du « Hendref ». La partie plus grande au sud faisait partie autrefois du pâturage commun.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG—Die Wüstungen im Südwesten von Carmarthenshire. Neuere Forschungsarbeiten haben die bisher allgemein gültige Auffassung korrigiert, dass es das mittelalterliche System der offenen Felder und die Einhegung nach englischem Muster in Wales nicht gegeben hat. Diese Abhandlung berichtigt auch den Eindruck, Verwüstung von Dörfern und Weilern sei auf England beschränkt gewesen, und verfolgt zu diesem Zweck die Entwicklung der Siedlungsformen im 'Commote of Laugharne' im Südwesten von Carmarthenshire. Es wird aufgezeigt, dass die heutige Form nicht, wie im allgemeinen angenommen wird, die ursprüngliche ist, sondern sich im Laufe der letzten 600-700 Jahre aus einer Anzahl von Dörfern und Weilern zu einer Landschaft vorwiegend mit Einzelhöfen und mit nur vier Ballungen entwickelt hat. Es wird nachgewiesen, dass der Verschwinden der anderen Ballungen aus ähnlichen Gründen wie bei den Wüstungen in England geschieht, nämlich aus dem Wunsch der Grossgrundbesitzer, von den gegen Ende des 15. und zu Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts stark angestiegenen Wollpreisen zu profitieren, und durch das Anlegen von Parks. Es wird auch dargestellt, wie die Stammesgrundlage der walisischen Gesellschaft und das Pachtsystem zu den Entvölkerungen beitrugen oder sie verhinderten.

ABB. 1—Das 'Commote of Laugharne'—Lage und Relief

ABB. 2—Siedlungsform

ABB. 3—Pächter in der Gemeinde Marros im Jahre 1841

ABB. 4—Zerstückelung der Landbesitze in der Gemeinde Marros im Jahre 1841. Turpitts Farm (getüpfelt) zeigt die Ländereien neben der Kirche mit einem grösseren Besitz weiter nördlich am Marrosberg, der früher Allmende oder 'Cyttir' war.

ABB. 5—Pächter in der Gemeinde Pendine im Jahre 1841

ABB. 6—Zerstückelung der Landbesitze in der Gemeinde Pendine im Jahre 1841. Big House Farm (getüpfelt) zeigt die Besiedelung der Gemeindelandes von 'Hendref' weg. Der grössere südliche Teil gehörte früher mit zur Allmende.

